

The Camp Fire.

A. MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

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ADDRESS - - TORONTO, ONT.

Subscription, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS a Year.

NOTE.—It is proposed to make this the cheapest Temperance paper in the world, taking into consideration its size, the matter it contains and the price at which it is published.

Every friend of temperance is earnestly requested to assist in this effort by subscribing and by sending in facts or arguments that might be of interest or use to our workers.

The editor will be thankful for correspondence upon any topic connected with the temperance reform. Our limited space will compel condensation. No letter for publication should contain more than two hundred words—if shorter, still better.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1897

THE GREAT CONVENTIONS.

If the most enthusiastic and earnest work can ensure the fullest success, then the success of the great Women's Christian Temperance Union meetings to be held in the city next month, is already ensured.

At present it looks as if there is no probability of any hitch in the carrying out of the programme originally drawn up. Nearly all the distinguished workers who were expected to be present, have accepted the invitations tendered them. There will be present a notable array of those who have done so much to mould aright the thought and action of many lives. It will be a gathering representative of the World's Christian Temperance sentiment such as has not before been held in the Dominion.

All the meetings will be worth attending. All the addresses will be worth listening to and reading. Every day's work will be productive of incalculable good.

Those who come to Toronto for these great events will be well repaid for the time and money they spend. We sincerely hope that the prohibitionists of Canada will do all they can to encourage our faithful and enthusiastic sisters in this laudable undertaking.

A LITERATURE CAMPAIGN.

The Dominion Alliance has issued a circular giving information about Plebiscite literature. The plan that is adopted and liberal proposal made will no doubt be hailed with much satisfaction by prohibitionists in every part of the Dominion. From a central fund the Alliance proposes to pay a part of the cost of the literature to be used, so that specially valuable campaign documents may be secured by friends in every part of the country at a trifling cost.

Already there is published a list of twenty tracts that are available on this plan. Circulars are sent out suggesting plans and methods for distribution, the object being to have literature circulation so systemized and carried out as to give us the best educational campaign ever yet carried on.

The tracts that are published have been prepared with utmost care. They are well written, full of reliable information, put in attractive and simple form. They are in short the best literature of the kind that has yet been published in Canada. Any friends desiring further information or sample copies can obtain the same by writing therefore to the Secretary of the Dominion Alliance.

GETTING READY.

In another column will be found some interesting information regarding the last convention of the Ontario liquor sellers, and the plans which they are laying to defeat us in the coming Plebiscite campaign. Our opponents are evidently full of anxiety over the situation and fearful that the result may be seriously injurious to their business. Their activity ought to be to us a warning and an incentive. We shall have a hard fight of it and we have ahead of us something well worth all the effort we can make.

The liquor party have come to the conclusion that they must make their business their politics. They go so far as to give a list of members of the Ontario Legislature who are to be opposed, and a list of those who are to be supported. The plan they recommend is certainly a wise one and that which is most likely to be effective in an election contest. It is exactly the system that we have strongly endorsed from time to time and recommended to the temperance electorate.

When we find that our weapons are approved and adopted by the enemy we may well have still more confidence in their value and effectiveness. Good plans are however, worth very little until put into actual operation. Earnestly we again appeal to our friends to lose no time in getting under way, thorough preparation for the coming Plebiscite and the coming provincial elections.

ORGANIZATION.

We are fast approaching the time of the year when the harvest work will be over and the organization of our forces for the great campaign ahead will be more easily carried out. In all probability the Plebiscite campaign will be upon us before a year has elapsed. Our preparations ought to be made without any further delay.

The Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island have already central provincial bodies at work on plans and local organization. The Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia will no doubt soon be also fully in line.

These central provincial organizations however, will not be able to do much more than advise and direct the workers in the various localities. The weight of responsibility must rest upon the rank and file of our army in the different parts of the Dominion. Local organization need not wait for provincial action.

Earnestly we appeal to our friends in every place to at once organize their local committees or associations. If they desire any special information as to how they ought to proceed they can obtain the same from their Provincial Officers or by dropping a card to F. S. Spence, 51 Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

CITIES AND TOWNS.

There has lately been a marvellous change in the distribution of population in nearly every civilized community. Cities have grown apace while the population of rural communities has been growing less.

Evil has always been stronger and more aggressive in cities and towns than in rural places. The tendency of the change that has been taking place has not been to strengthen morality and religious sentiment. In cities and towns there are more temptations to sin and more opportunities for wrong doing than in rural places. Wrong

doing is also more easily concealed and an additional restraint is taken away from those who are very susceptible to public opinion.

It is not encouraging to know in this connection that temperance societies have been growing weaker in many of our cities and towns. They still maintain in many places their hold upon the rural community. In more populous places they are crowded out by the pressure of other institutions.

These facts impose a heavy responsibility upon the friends of the temperance cause in our population centres. We cannot afford to lose ground in those places in which the population is increasing and dangers are intensifying. The temperance orders ought to direct their energies specially to those places that are in special need. If they do this there ought to be a great revival of temperance society work during the coming winter, in the cities, towns and villages of the Dominion.

STAND BY THE WORK.

Prohibition will speedily become an accomplished fact in the Dominion of Canada when we have secured the development of a strong, aggressive, energetic public opinion in its favor.

The people of Canada as a whole, believe in prohibition. Their belief in the rightness of this policy has however, never yet risen to a point of determined, insistence upon the enactment and enforcement of the legislation they desire.

The work of education is far from being complete. We have now the delay of waiting for and taking a Plebiscite, simply because the people have not made prohibition a dominant political issue. Had this reform been given the prominence it should have had in the last Dominion election, Parliament would have made the enactment of prohibition a first duty. We would have had action instead of delay. There has not yet been the up-rising of the electorate in favor of prohibition which the merits of this reform deserve, and which its importance demands.

Educational forces must then display renewed and continued activity. Lodges, Divisions, Councils, Unions and all other agencies must do more than they yet have done. There is danger of our relying upon the strength of public opinion, instead of realizing the duty of continually cultivating and encouraging the growth of that opinion. A weakening interest in temperance societies is not a hopeful sign. The enthusiasm of sound temperance men ought to impel them to the maintenance and strengthening of every institution that can help on the temperance cause.

We appeal then to Good Templars, Sons of Temperance, Royal Templars of Temperance, W.C.T.U. workers and all other soldiers of this great crusade to rally more earnestly than ever they have done round the banner of our cause. Every drill occasion should see every warrior in his place. Every recruiting opportunity should see a band of new members enrolled. One of the surest methods to win a great victory in the coming campaign, is to inspire and build up every temperance organization in Canada during the season that is just beginning.

ACTION NEEDED.

In our concentration of effort on the Plebiscite campaign, in our earnest effort after the comprehensive measure of national prohibition, we must not forget the duty that rests upon us to

exercise immediately all the power we possess to restrict the evil doing of the liquor traffic.

At their approaching sessions, Legislatures will be assailed with demands for further effective measures to curtail the licensed liquor traffic. That is right. We should miss no opportunity of securing any legislation that may weaken the traffic's power for evil or making easier its ultimate extinction.

It is sometimes easier to talk than to act. Less self-sacrifice and less effort is involved in an appeal to Parliament or Legislature, than in the exercise of local power that most communities already have. Where people have availed themselves of every means at their disposal, to suppress the liquor traffic, we may be sure of the sincerity of their avowed hostility to that traffic. The extent to which the restrictive features of license laws are put in operation and the extent to which local option legislation has been adopted, may to some extent be taken as measuring the enthusiasm and thoroughness of the prohibition sentiment in that locality.

It is right that the strong should help the weak and that the temperance sentiment of the progressive provinces, counties or towns, should be exerted in securing better general legislation for all provinces, counties and towns. The broader the measure the more useful will it be. While hoping and working for this wider legislation however, we must not ignore the duty that lies at our own doors, the carrying out of which will do more in educating the people than could be done in any other way.

The sacrifice that men make for a cause may be taken as the measure of their zeal for that cause. It is claimed that making sacrifice for a cause strengthens our zeal. We love those most for whom we voluntarily do the most. Work for the temperance cause will develop in those who carry it on, stronger enthusiasm. We can do nothing to confirm converts in the faith so effective as giving them plenty of work for the cause they have espoused. Indolence and inaction are the deadliest foes with which we have to contend.

No kind of work should be neglected. Attendance at private lodge meetings will not absolve us for the duty of public educative meetings. The holding of successful meetings will not take the place of distribution of judicious literature. Work in lodges and public meetings and from house to house will not supply the need of effective sermons and Sunday-school instruction. Work must be done on every possible line.

Our effort is the measure of our earnestness. Our success will be proportionate to our efforts. Public opinion will grow just in proportion to our work to make it grow. The triumph of the temperance cause waits only on the earnest efforts of those who believe in that cause.

"WHAT CAN WE DO?"

"Oh, what can we do my brothers,
To speed the cause along?
We can speak a word to others;
We can cheer them with a song;
We can give them hearty greeting;
We can take them by the hand;
We can bring them to the ballot;
We can help them firmly stand.

Oh, what can we do, my brothers,
To haste the longed for day
When the weeping babes and mothers
Shall wipe their tears away?
We can sow the seed and reap it;
We can help the sad hearts sing;
We can vote for Prohibition
In the strength of Christ our King."